

James Monroe to Andrew Jackson, March 1, 1817, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

SECRETARY MONROE TO JACKSON.

Washington, March 1, 1817.

Dear sir. I wrote you, a short letter, lately, by Genl. Bernard,¹ and intended to have written you another, but had not time; indeed, so constantly have I been engaged, in highly important business, that I have not had a moment for my friends.

1 Nov. 15, 1816, President Madison, acting under a resolution of Congress, Apr. 29, 1816, commissioned General Simon Bernard as "assistant in the corps of engineers of the United States". See p. 269, n. 3, *ante*.

In the course of last summer, the President offerd the dept. of war, to Mr Clay, who then declind it. Since it was known, that the suffrages of my fellow citizens, had decided in my favor, I renewd to him the offer, which he has again declined. My mind was immediately fixd on you, tho' I doubted, whether, I ought, to wish, to draw you, from the command of the army, to the South, where in case of any emergency, no one could supply your place. At this moment, our friend, Mr Campbell, called and informd me that you wished me not to nominate you. In this state, I have resolved to nominate Govr. Shelby, tho' it is uncertain whether he will serve. His experience, and long and meritorious services, give him a claim over younger men, in that State or Ohio.

I shall take a person for the dept. of State from the Eastward, and Mr Adams's claim, by long service, in our diplomatic concerns, appe[ar]ding to entitle him to the preference, supported, by his acknowledged abilities and integrity, his nomination will go to the

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Senate. Mr Crawford, it is expected will remain in the Treasury. After all that has been said, I have thought, that I should put the admn., more on national ground, by taking the Secry of State, from the Eastward, than from this quarter, or the South, or west. By this arrangment, there can be no cause to suspect, unfair combination, for improper purposes. Each member will stand, in his own merit, and the people, respect, us, all, according to our conduct. To each I will act, impartially, and of each, expect the performance of his duty. While I am here, I shall make, the admn., first, for the country, and its cause, secondly, to give effect, to the government of the people through me, for the time of my appointment, not for the aggrandizement of any one.

with great respect and sincere regard yours

As my letters to you are private and confidential, it seems hardly necessary, to state it